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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Yugoslavia

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SUBJECT Present Highway Problems in Yugoslavia

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SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

1. A meeting was held between 15 and 17 December 1949 in the Yugoslav Ministry of Communications to discuss existing highway problems. Present at the meeting were representatives of the Federal Directorate for Highways, the Economic Council, the Yugoslav Planning Commission, as well as representatives from the Ministries of Communications of the individual republics. Reports on problems concerning highway services in the various republics were submitted and discussed, and decisions on all the more important questions were made.
2. First on the agenda was a discussion concerning the results of the plans which were accepted in 1949. It was established that these plans were not entirely fulfilled because enterprises for construction of roads and bridges remained under the management of the Ministry for Construction, thus making it impossible for the Federal Directorate for Highways to exert direct influence upon the operations; because work on highways was not given a priority; because manpower was lacking as a result of the fact that the AOP (Armija Odbrane Poredak - Army for Defense of the Regime) of the various enterprises transferred highway workers and equipment to other objectives; and because plans for the work to be done were not prepared on time.
3. In order to remedy the above defects, it was proposed to transfer the entire operation of planning and construction of roads and bridges from the Ministry of Construction to the Ministry of Communications. A priority was also requested for the completion, in 1950, of work on highways, since a good road system is essential to the execution of the production tasks set by the economic plan.
4. The meeting next established the potential for road building operations in the individual republics in order to determine if it was possible to execute these operations according to the quotas established. The conclusion was reached that the tasks delegated to highway operations could be carried out, provided that such operations together with their staff and inventories came under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Communications.
5. Directives were issued to give priority to regular maintenance of highways and large scale repairs, to wagon roads and their modernization through reconstruction, and finally to new constructions. In addition, priority

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should be given to unfinished work begun in 1949 or earlier and to the replacement of provisional bridges which have served their purpose.

6. One of the conditions stressed in connection with highway construction concerned an up-to-date preparation of plans. A construction program should, therefore, be worked out for all building operations currently unplanned, and this program is to be submitted to the respective planning organizations.
7. With respect to improvements of the federal highway system, it was pointed out that the condition of the existing highway system does not correspond to the demands of normal traffic. The motorization of highway traffic will increase from year to year at an ever-increasing rate, and motor traffic puts special demands on the techniques of new highway construction, as well as improvement and maintenance of existing roads. Some 34,000 kilometers of road have been inherited from pre-war Yugoslavia, of which 60 percent do not have a stone foundation. In the period between the two world wars, only 850 kilometers of modern roads were constructed, while the remaining roads, apart from poor surfaces, are built with materials of inferior quality. Approximately 45 percent of the pre-war bridges were provisional wooden bridges.
8. In view of the existing condition of the highway system, any planning, improvement, and construction of roads must take the following points into consideration:
 - a. Maintenance of existing roads must be regular and constant because, although certain roads may have a greater or lesser value, all roads must be kept up.
 - b. Since most Yugoslav highways have the usual stone foundation, macadam or chaussee, they are generally very soon run down in those sections where motor transport is heaviest, and it is therefore necessary, in addition to regular maintenance, to renew these highways periodically by rolling in new deposits of pestled stone.
 - c. The existing highways must be provided with modern surfaces in order to adapt them to increased motor transportation.
 - d. In addition to regular maintenance and improvement of existing highways, new roads must be built in those sections where the interests of the national economy require such construction.
 - e. Temporary bridges, erected to replace those destroyed during the war, are to be replaced by new permanent bridges.
9. The present status of road maintenance services was discussed at great length at the meeting. It was established that in 1949 these services generally operated through the National Peoples' District Committees, and that they functioned very poorly. Although the budgets of the republics provided insufficient appropriations for regular maintenance of highways, these appropriations were not even used for the purpose intended, since the Committees displayed little understanding or interest in regular road maintenance. It had almost become an established practice to assign road workers and their supervisors to other construction jobs. In order to remedy these inefficiencies, road maintenance services should be regulated on an equal basis throughout Yugoslavia according to the following organizational plan:
 - a. The Yugoslav Ministry of Communications, and through it the Federal Directorate for Highways, will not only have a leading role in road maintenance services, but will also be the responsible authority for maintenance of federal roads through republic and district agencies for road maintenance.

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- b. The Ministries of Communications of the Yugoslav republics are responsible for the maintenance of roads within their respective republics, as the responsible authority acting through the provincial agencies for road maintenance.
 - c. Maintenance of provincial, district and local roads will be in the hands of the corresponding executive committees operating through provincial and district agencies for road maintenance, and employing "voluntary" labor.
 - d. The municipal local Narodni Odbor (Peoples' Committee), through its personnel, will be in charge of maintenance of municipal highways, local roads and streets.
10. It was further decided to establish agencies on a republic level for the maintenance of roads with modern surfaces, while provincial and municipal agencies will be established to maintain the remaining roads. The main problem of the agencies lies in finding a rational solution for obtaining supplies and transportation of stone and gravel, which are the basic materials in road construction. It will therefore be necessary to set up special agencies within the republics to procure stone and gravel.
11. It is characteristic of highway maintenance work that such work must be done efficiently and speedily, as any prolongation of work increases expenses and delays use of the roads. Therefore, it is expedient that a permanent road worker remain at various sections of the road so that he may get acquainted with his own particular section and also upon his own initiative or upon orders from his supervisor, carry out the smaller jobs connected with the maintenance of the road, either individually or with the help of brigades. The presence of a permanent worker on the road is necessary in keeping with the rule for the protection of roads and the periodic checking of road traffic. It was decided that these road workers should become permanent workers of the enterprise for maintenance of highways, and that they will be paid in accordance with the work performed. In like manner, road inspectors must become permanent employees of the agency for highway maintenance.
12. The next discussion concerned organizational problems of the road services in general. It was observed that the principal difficulties encountered by the Highway Directorates had arisen because of a lack of experts, disorganized road services, and the dismemberment of operating services. In order to overcome these difficulties, it will be necessary first of all to devote to highway services the attention due to them in accordance with their importance and role in the national economy. Along with the railroads, the greater part of Yugoslav internal transportation is carried out by the road; but because the roads are in a poor state of repairs, billions of dinars have to be expended annually for their maintenance. This problem of maintenance and improvement of the federal highway system is a vast one and can only be successfully overcome if a trained staff and an efficient organization of road services is available. These road services, because of their size and character must not be separate and independent units but should be centralized and systematized within the Ministry of Communications.
13. Departing from the point of view that the highway system represents an organic whole and serves the same purpose, the maintenance, improvement and construction of roads, regardless of their importance, should be implemented according to identical principles, regulations and directives throughout the country.

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14. The Highway Directorate of the Ministry of Communications of each of the republics will cooperate with the Federal Highway Directorate in preparing regulations to be carried out by the highway service, and will be responsible for highway conditions in its respective republic. It will also be responsible for the application of the accepted statutes, directives, instructions, models, and norms in the fields of blueprinting, planning, construction and maintenance of roads. Furthermore, in accordance with the authority vested in it, this Directorate will draft plans for work on the highway system on the republic level, cooperate in the formulation of plans for the federal public highway works in the republic, and coordinate the plans of the Provincial and District Highway Directorates. By means of the authority of the Army for the Defense of the Regime (AOP), it will directly be in charge of the organizations and strengthening of the republic's planning and operational duties. The planning staffs under the administrative and operational jurisdiction of republic Ministries of Communications will plan authorized public works for all republic highways, while the republic agencies will carry out the work of regular maintenance of modern surface highways.
15. The Highway Directorate of the Communications Commission of the Provincial National Committee will be responsible for the condition of roads and for the application of laws and orders dealing with the protection and use of public roads within the province. This Directorate will plan public works for provincial highways, and cooperate with the Highway Directorate of the republic Ministry of Communications in planning public works for federal and republic highways. Within the authority of the Army for the Defense of the Regime, this Directorate will directly supervise organization of highway maintenance agencies and enterprises for the production of construction material.
16. The representative for highways in the Communications Commission of the District National Committee (SNO) will be responsible for the application of highway laws within the district, will plan public works for highways on the district and local level, and, in cooperation with "people's organizations", will supervise the maintenance of highways within the district with the aid of "voluntary" labor.
17. Among the many other decisions reached was one concerning the necessity for completing the classification of national highways with regard to their importance. Upon the completion of this classification, each highway will be provided with kilometer markings from the beginning to the end of the road, and at the same time data will be gathered for the establishment of a record of highways and bridges. In this way every individual road will be treated as a planned objective which will be indexed in the Federal Highway Directorate and in the Territorial Highway Directorate (administration) of each republic's Ministry of Communications.
18. The file index for each individual highway will contain information on the condition of the highway at the time the record was made out, such as its length, surface construction, load capacity, and the traffic situation. All subsequent road changes will be entered in the record.

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